



The Second Battle *of* Princeton?

by
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Princeton Battlefield is Now Among the Eleven
Most Endangered Historic Sites in the United States.

Now the PBS is engaged in a new fight to stop the IAS from building on the site of the battle's climax, otherwise known as Maxwell's Field.

At the lowest point of our fortunes in the winter of 1776–77, George Washington led his rag tag army on a daring all-night march around the flank of a far superior British army to attack its rear at Princeton. On the Princeton Battlefield, after rallying two routed brigades, Washington personally led a counterattack against the British that won him his first field victory over British regulars. Three companies of American marines were engaged in that fight and an American Marine captain was killed there, the first Marine to die on a battlefield. The Battle of Princeton is widely recognized by historians and scholars as one of the most important engagements and a turning point in America's War for Independence.

The Institute for Advanced Study ("IAS") is seeking to build faculty housing on the most critical segment of this battlefield, the land on which General George Washington and his troops broke the British line. The Princeton Battlefield Society seeks to prevent the IAS from destroying this hallowed ground.

The Princeton Battlefield Society (aka "Princeton Battlefield Area Preservation Society") was established in 1971 to protect, preserve and promote the Princeton Battlefield, the Clarke House, and the heritage of both to our American Revolutionary history. In the early 1970s the PBS helped stop another IAS development and increased the Princeton Battlefield State Park by 50%. Now the PBS is engaged in a new fight to stop the IAS from building on the site of the battle's climax, otherwise known as Maxwell's Field. To that end the PBS engaged counsel and experts to fight the IAS before the Princeton Regional Planning Board. After four nights of hearings, the Board voted against our objections.

The IAS relied on a 1992 settlement agreement over a lawsuit it filed against the township to block the inclusion of Maxwell's Field from the historic district. By this means they hoped to prevent the consideration of the site's historical significance from interfering with their development plans. Up until recently they denied that any part of the battle was fought on Maxwell's Field, but the evidence is so overwhelming that they have relented. Nevertheless they claim that the site's historical significance is irrelevant because the town cannot block their plans no matter how important the site is to the heritage of the Battle of Princeton which we liken to building on the site of Pickett's charge at Gettysburg.

The IAS enjoys a solid reputation for scholarship especially in the sciences such as physics and the greater part of their faculty come from abroad to study here. The faculty has boasted such distinguished faculty as Albert Einstein and J. Robert Oppenheimer. They have a history department for ancient and medieval history, but nothing for American history. They appear to have little if any appreciation for American history. In the 1940s the IAS fought the establishment of the Princeton Battlefield State Park, when New Jersey Governors Edge and Driscoll sought the cooperation of the IAS in providing land for the proposed park which included Maxwell's Field.

In 2008 the National Park Service named the Princeton Battlefield a Priority I Principal Site on its Report to Congress on Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States. The Princeton Battlefield is among just 29 Revolutionary War sites

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recognized as having a Priority I status. One year later the Battlefield was named one of the Ten Most Endangered sites in New Jersey by Preservation New Jersey, which cited the threat posed by the IAS' proposed housing development on the battlefield as one of the primary reasons for the designation. In 2009 the PBS was named a recipient of a \$30,542 grant from the American Battlefield Protection Program ("ABPP"), a division of the National Park Service. The purpose of the grant was to study the Battle of Princeton in an effort to map the boundaries of the battle beyond the borders of the area currently protected by the State of New Jersey. The study was accepted by the National Park Service in 2011 as having satisfied the high standards of scholarship, technique and analysis necessary to meet the exacting requirements of the program. The Study produced some 34 maps showing the troop movements during the course of the battle and the location of important features such as the Sawmill Road, the road taken by two-thirds of Washington's army in its approach to Princeton. These maps show the Sawmill Road cutting directly across the land owned by the IAS and on which it wants to build faculty housing. Moreover the Study shows that this land is the heart of the battlefield and encompasses the approximate center of both the British and American lines of battle.

The decision of the Princeton Planning Board two months ago to approve the IAS' application will not be finalized for months. This was not surprising given the fact that the Board knows their decision will be appealed. Our strategy before the Board was to present incontrovertible testimony on the historic significance of the site, the failure of the IAS to show compliance with the specific cluster zoning requirements, the clear terms of the 1992 agreement which froze the zoning on the site as it existed in 1992 before cluster zoning was added, and the Board's failure to allow us to further our case by refusing to issue requested subpoenas. As soon as the Planning Board writes up its findings and adopts them by resolution, we are prepared to file an appeal of the decision for a *de novo* review of the decision by the Superior Court of New Jersey. Unlike the staff of the Planning Board the judges will not have an investment in the success of the IAS. We believe we are in a strong position to overturn their decision and to win "The Second Battle of Princeton."

We need the support of my people if we are to win this battle. Your contribution to our Legal Defense Fund will make a difference. Visit our, www.ThePrincetonBattlefieldsociety.com, And send a donation to the Princeton Battlefield Society, noting your gift for our "Legal Defense Fund."

Thank you for your partnership and support as we work to protect America's history and heritage.

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Princeton Battlefield Among America's 11 "Most Endangered Historic Places"

On June 6, 2012, the National Trust for Historic Preservation named Princeton Battlefield in Princeton, N.J., to its 2012 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places. This annual list spotlights important examples of the nation's architectural, cultural and natural heritage that are at risk of destruction or irreparable damage. More than 230 sites have been on the list over its 25-year history, and in that time, only a handful of listed sites have been lost.

Shown here are pictures from the press conference held at the Battlefield. *Photos by Anna Savoia.*

For more information about the Trust and the 2012 list, click this link:

<http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/11-most-endangered/>

The 2012 list of America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places (in alphabetical order):

- **Bridges of Yosemite Valley, Calif.** – A proposed National Park Service management plan for the Merced River, which flows through the heart of Yosemite National Park, would leave three historic Rustic Style bridges in danger of removal—despite their significance to the park's treasured landscape.
- **Ellis Island Hospital Complex, New York Harbor, NY and NJ.** - Ellis Island was once known as an "Island of Hope" for immigrants who launched new lives in America, but the hospital and support structures on the Island—once comprising the largest U.S. Public Health Service institution in the country—are now dilapidated and threatened by lack of funding.
- **Historic U.S. Post Office Buildings** – From coast to coast, historic American post office buildings are facing uncertain futures. Due to the U.S. Postal Services haphazard disposition process, developers and others interested in purchasing and rehabbing

Mayor Yina Moore, Princeton Borough



Walter W. Gallas, AICP, Director, National Trust for Historic Preservation Northeast Field Office



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Bruce Afran, Esq., Attorney for the Princeton Battlefield Society



these historic buildings end up walking away after failing to get timely or clear answers from the Postal Service.

- **Joe Frazier's Gym, Philadelphia, Pa.** – The gym where boxing legend Joe Frazier trained for his victorious bout against Muhammad Ali is currently for sale, unrecognized and unprotected by local or national preservation designations.

- **Malcolm X-Ella Little-Collins House, Boston, Ma.** – Built in 1874, this modest structure is the last known surviving boyhood home of Malcolm X. Largely unused for over 30 years, plans are in development to rehabilitate and reuse the deteriorating property as living quarters for graduate students who are studying African American history, social justice, or civil rights.

- **Princeton Battlefield, Princeton, N.J.** – Princeton Battlefield, the site of a historic battle that was pivotal in changing the tide of the American Revolution, is threatened by a proposed housing development that would adversely impact the historic landscape.

- **Sweet Auburn Historic District, Atlanta, Ga.** Sweet Auburn, a prime example of the flourishing segregated African-American neighborhoods in the South during the Jim Crow era and birthplace of Martin Luther King Jr., faces disinvestment and inappropriate development along its commercial corridor.

- **Terminal Island, Port of Los Angeles, Calif.** – Terminal Island was a major shipbuilding center, the place where America's tuna canning industry came of age, the site of the forced removal of nearly 3,000 Japanese-Americans residents in 1942, and is now a popular setting for movie and TV productions. This site is threatened by continued neglect due to long-term vacancy of the historic buildings, and a proposed plan that limits reuse of the buildings and, in some cases, calls for their demolition.

- **Texas Courthouses.** – Texas' 244 courthouses serve as important architectural and historical records of the state's past. Physical deterioration outpaces the availability of public funds necessary for courthouse restoration and revitalization, and competing needs for limited revenue challenge their future.

- **Theodore Roosevelt's Elkhorn Ranch, Billings County, N.D.** – As Theodore Roosevelt's home in the North Dakota Badlands, the Elkhorn Ranch inspired his views on conservation. Today it is threatened by a proposed road and bridge that would forever mar the Elkhorn Ranch landscape and stain Roosevelt's legacy of conservation.

- **Village of Zoar, Ohio** – This 195-year old Village in Northeast Ohio was founded in 1817 by religious separatists fleeing Germany. Remarkably intact, the Village is threatened by the potential removal of a levee that could lead to massive flooding or require demolition of much of the town.

